

(12) **United States Patent**
Topolovac et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 10,357,424 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jul. 23, 2019**

(54) **VIBRATORY ACTUATOR AND DEVICE FOR SEXUAL STIMULATION**

A61H 23/02 (2013.01); *A61H 23/0218* (2013.01); *A61H 23/0263* (2013.01); *A61H 23/04* (2013.01);

(71) Applicant: **Crave Innovations, Inc.**, San Francisco, CA (US)

(Continued)

(72) Inventors: **Michael Topolovac**, San Francisco, CA (US); **Edwin Wood**, San Francisco, CA (US); **Andrew Murphy**, San Francisco, CA (US); **Tian Yi Chang**, San Francisco, CA (US); **Kristrun Hjartar**, Van Nuys, CA (US)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC *A61H 19/30*; *A61H 19/34*; *A61H 19/40*; *A61H 19/44*; *A61H 2201/0107*; *A61H 2201/5002*; *A61H 2201/501*; *A61H 2201/5012*
See application file for complete search history.

(73) Assignee: **Crave Innovations, Inc.**, San Francisco, CA (US)

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 278 days.

7,438,681 B2 10/2008 Kobashikawa et al.
8,174,371 B2 5/2012 Schwieger
(Continued)

Primary Examiner — Christine H Matthews

(21) Appl. No.: **15/433,879**

(74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm — Jeffrey Schox; Diana Lin

(22) Filed: **Feb. 15, 2017**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2017/0156971 A1 Jun. 8, 2017

Related U.S. Application Data

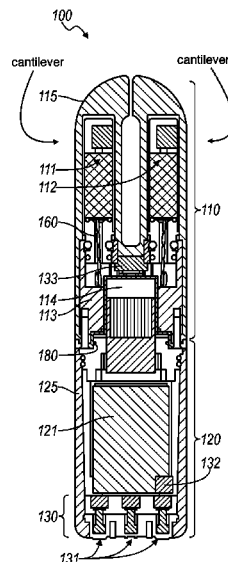
(60) Continuation of application No. 15/184,273, filed on Jun. 16, 2016, now Pat. No. 9,603,770, which is a (Continued)

A device for sexual stimulation, preferably including: an interaction module; a power module; and a stimulation unit driver. The interaction module preferably includes a haptic stimulation unit enclosed by a first unitary housing and electrically coupled to a first electrical port. The power module preferably includes: an input mechanism; and a rechargeable battery enclosed by a second unitary housing and electrically coupled to a second electrical port. The first and second unitary housings are preferably configured to be removably mechanically coupled to each other by the first and second electrical ports, which are preferably configured to be removably electrically coupled to each other. When the first and second electrical ports are electrically coupled, the stimulation unit driver is preferably electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery, the haptic stimulation unit, and the input mechanism.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A61H 19/00 (2006.01)
A61H 23/00 (2006.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *A61H 19/40* (2013.01); *A61H 19/30* (2013.01); *A61H 19/34* (2013.01); *A61H 19/44* (2013.01); *A61H 23/00* (2013.01);

20 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



Related U.S. Application Data

division of application No. 14/094,558, filed on Dec. 2, 2013, now Pat. No. 9,393,175, which is a continuation of application No. 13/584,659, filed on Aug. 13, 2012, now Pat. No. 9,144,531.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A61H 23/02 (2006.01)
A61H 23/04 (2006.01)
A61N 1/36 (2006.01)
A61H 9/00 (2006.01)
A61N 5/06 (2006.01)
A61N 1/05 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC *A61N 1/36007* (2013.01); *A61H 9/0078* (2013.01); *A61H 2023/0272* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/0107* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/0165* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/0207* (2013.01); *A61H*

2201/0214 (2013.01); *A61H 2201/501* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5002* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5012* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5015* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5035* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5038* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5048* (2013.01); *A61H 2201/5097* (2013.01); *A61N 1/0524* (2013.01); *A61N 2005/0659* (2013.01)

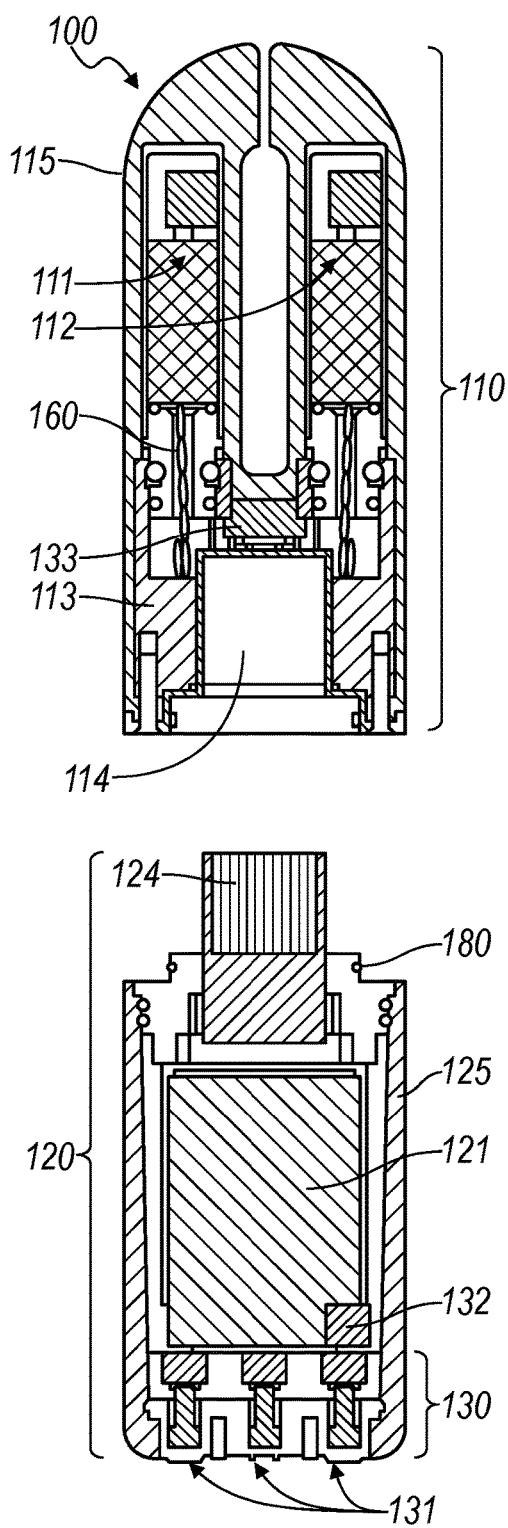
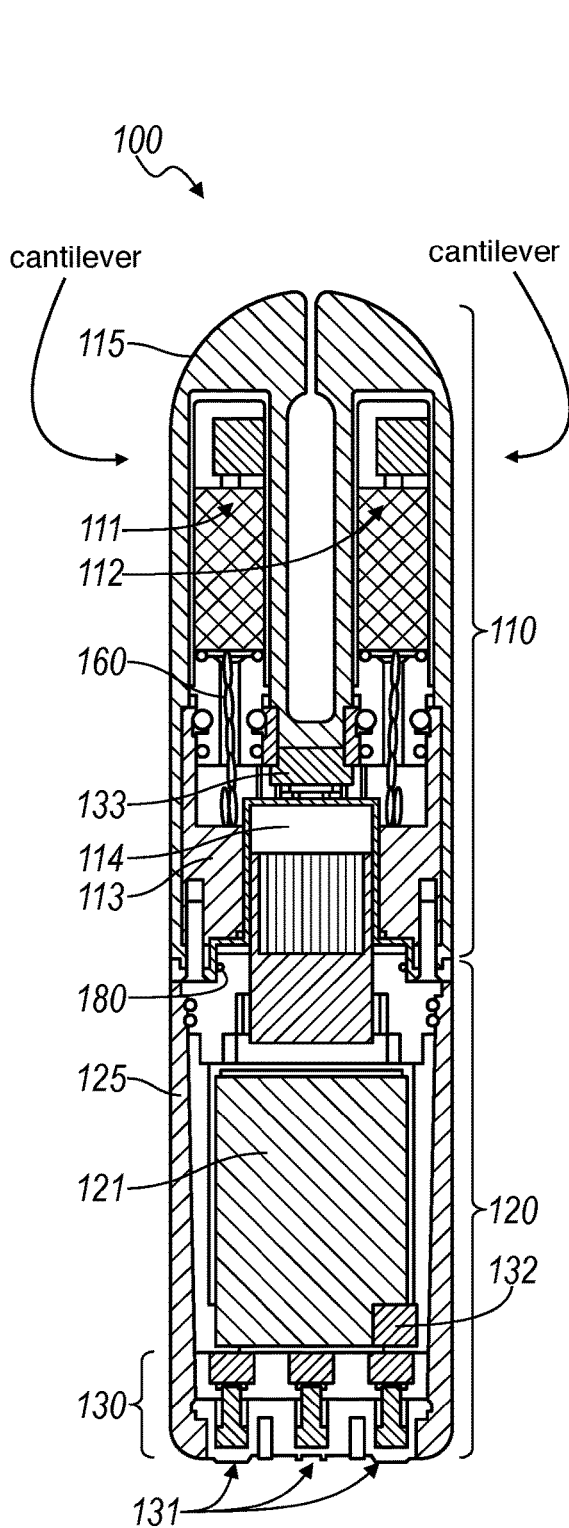
(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

8,821,421 B2	9/2014	Imboden et al.	
9,383,175 B2	7/2016	Walter et al.	
2003/0162595 A1 *	8/2003	Serbanescu	<i>A61H 19/34</i>
			472/1
2009/0318753 A1	12/2009	Metri	
2011/0124959 A1	5/2011	Murison	

* cited by examiner



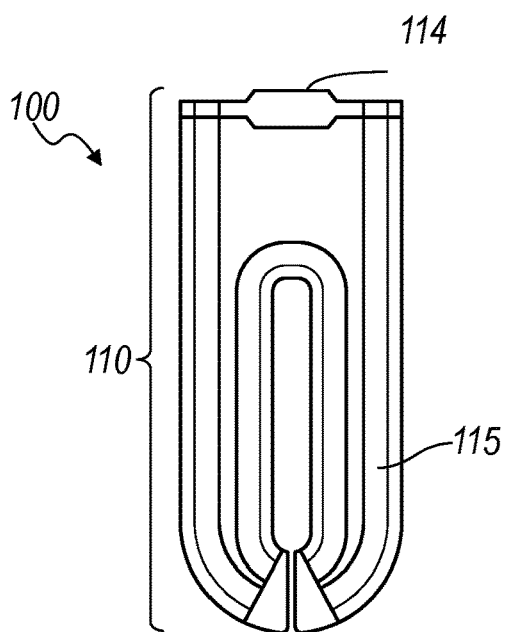


FIG. 3A

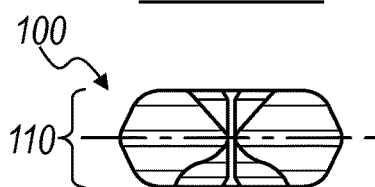


FIG. 3B

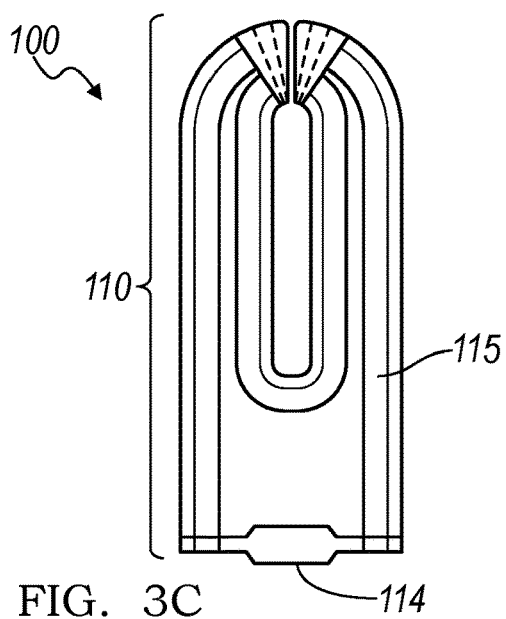


FIG. 3C

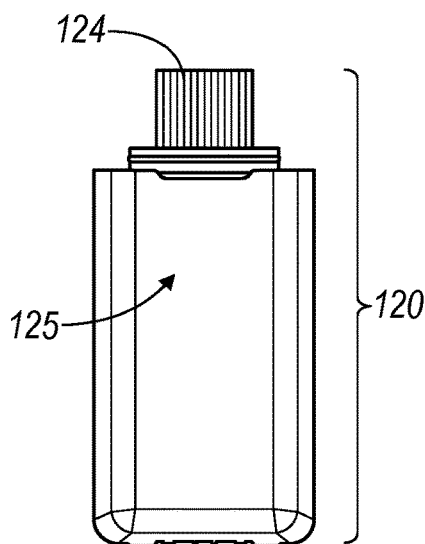
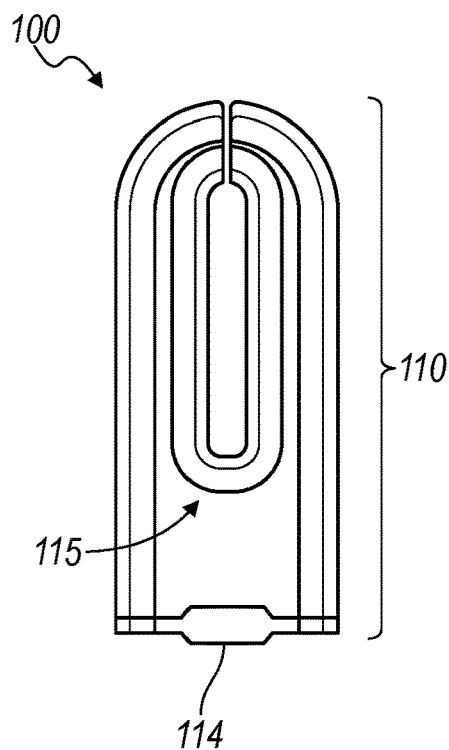


FIG. 4

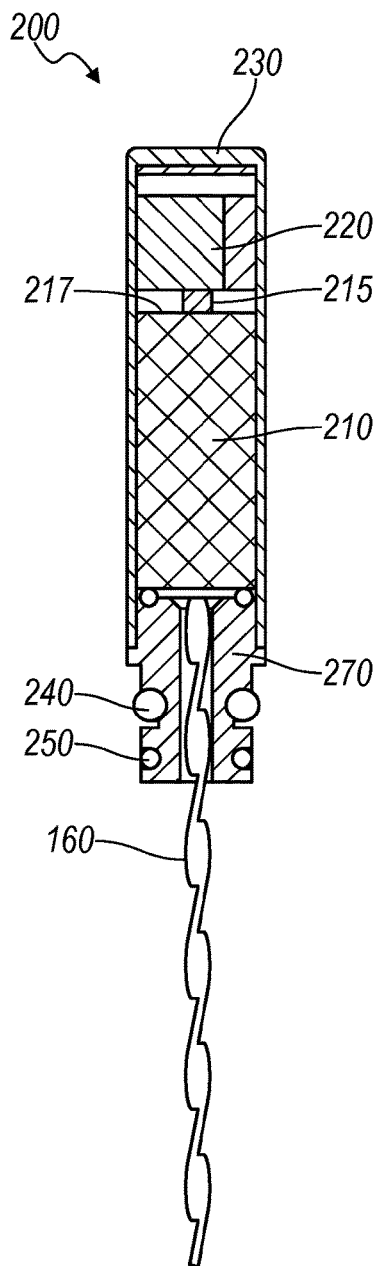


FIG. 5

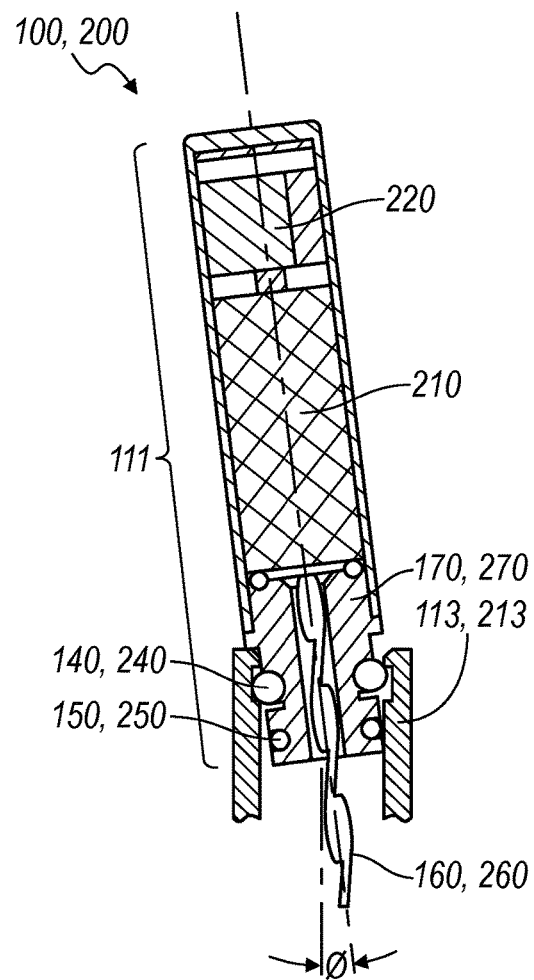


FIG. 6

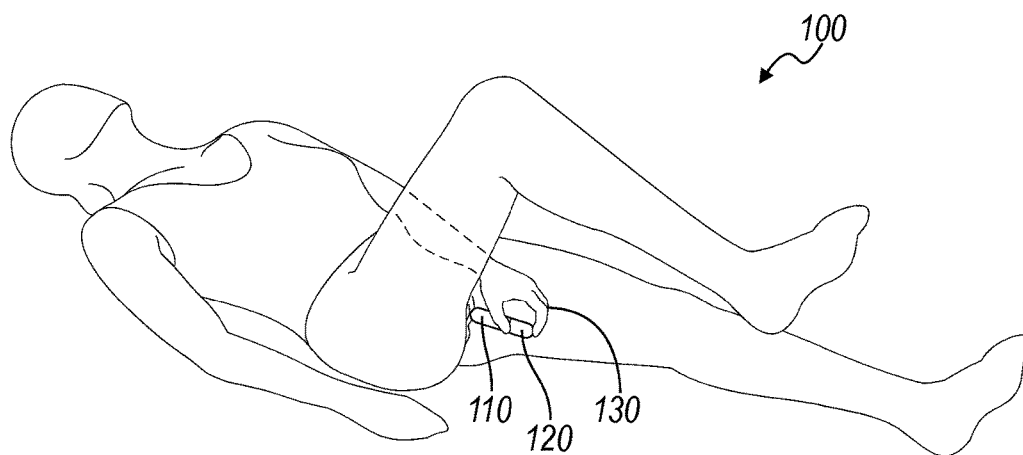


FIG. 7

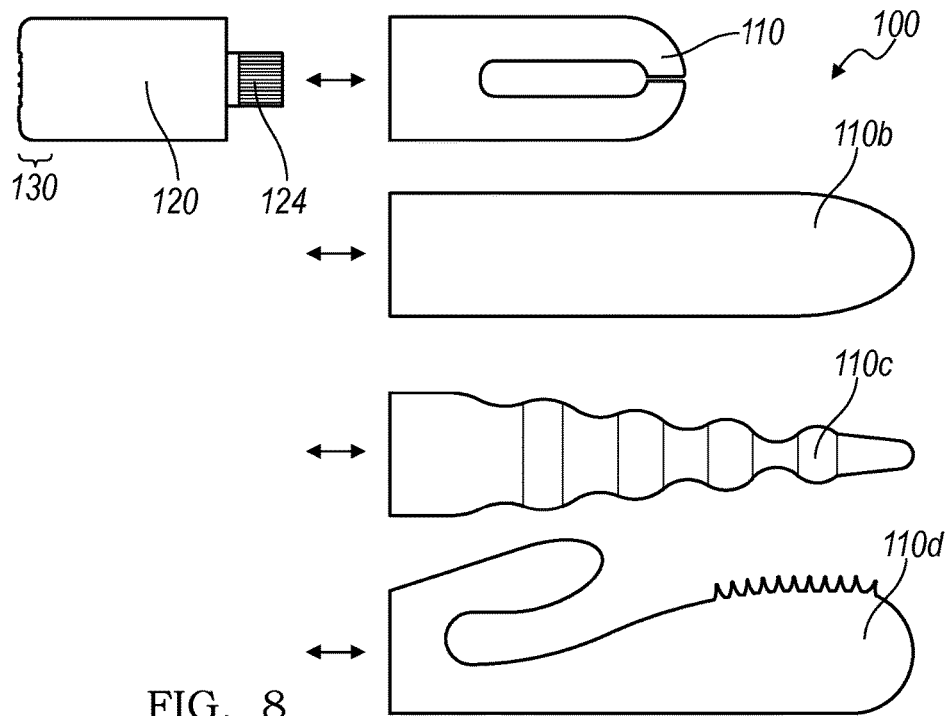
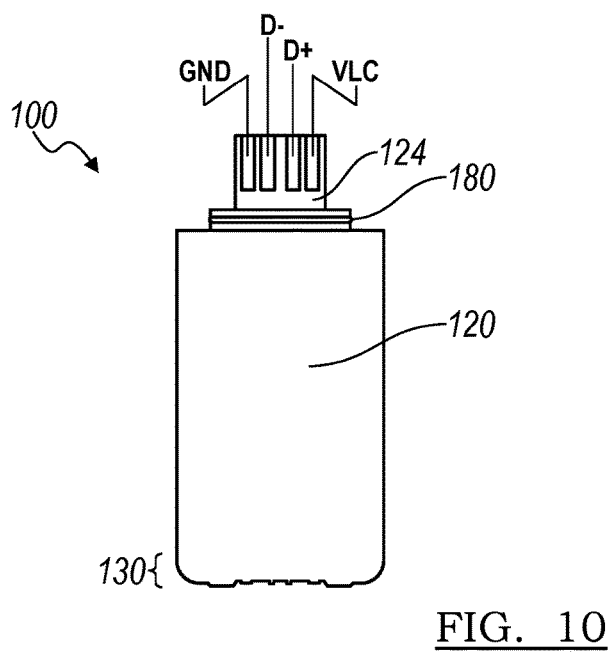
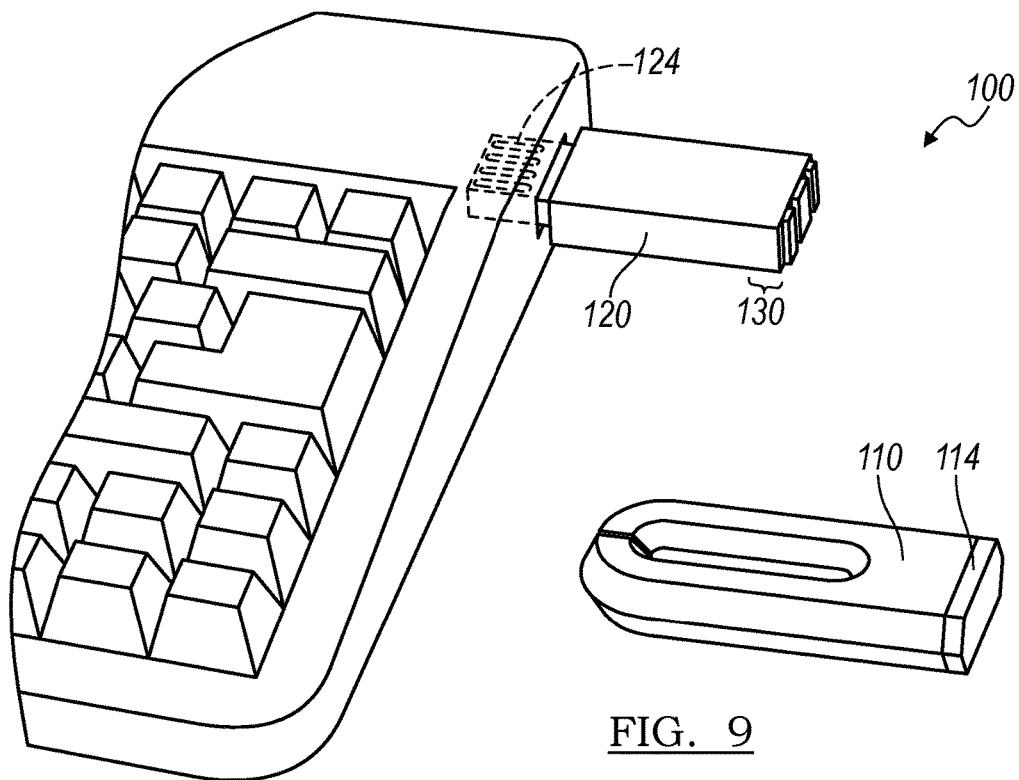


FIG. 8



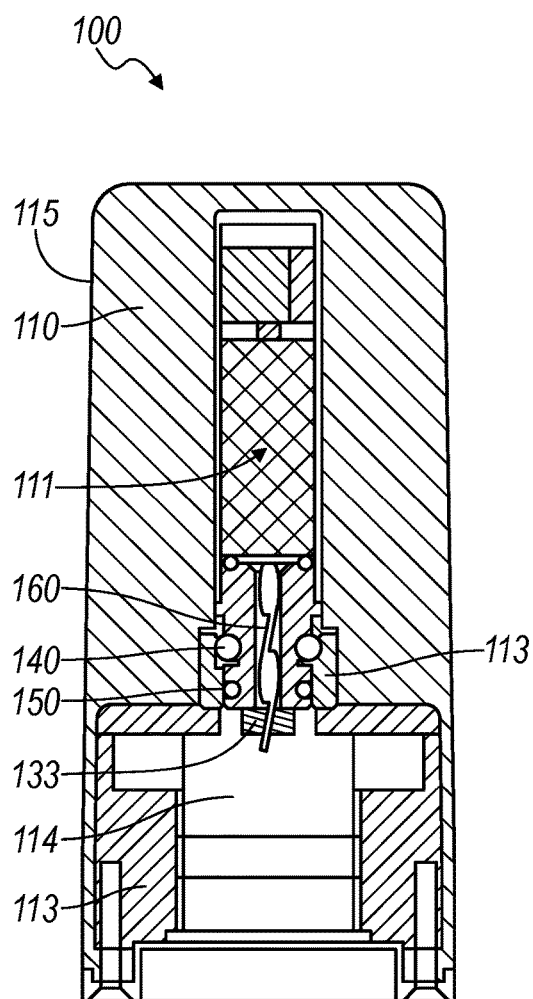


FIG. 11A

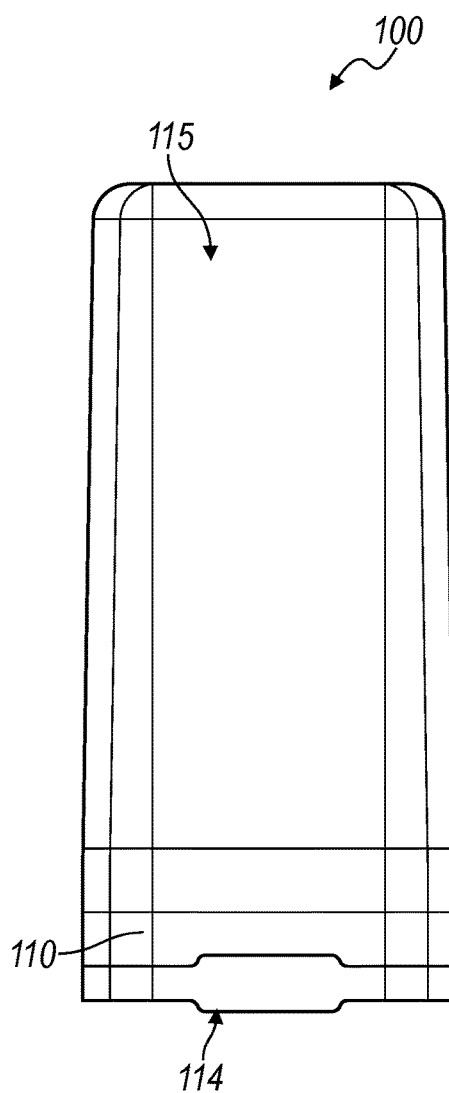


FIG. 11B

1

VIBRATORY ACTUATOR AND DEVICE FOR SEXUAL STIMULATION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/184,273, filed 16 Jun. 2016, which is a divisional application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/094,558, filed 2 Dec. 2013, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/584,659, filed on 13 Aug. 2012, all of which are incorporated in their entirety by this reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates generally to the field of sexual paraphernalia, and more specifically to a new and useful vibratory actuator and a new and useful device for sexual stimulation in the field of sexual paraphernalia.

BACKGROUND

Vibrators and other sex toys are becoming increasingly popular as sexual health is becoming increasingly recognized as essential to overall personal wellbeing, particularly for women. However, though typically recognized as very private and personal products, many sex toys retain functions that are excessively conspicuous, both when in use and when not. Therefore, there is a need in the field of sexual stimulation paraphernalia for a new and useful vibratory actuator and a new and useful device for sexual stimulation.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 is a schematic representation of a preferred device in a first configuration;

FIG. 2 is a schematic representation of the preferred device in a second configuration;

FIGS. 3A, 3B, and 3C are elevation, plan, and elevation views, respectively, in accordance with one variation of an interaction module of the preferred device;

FIG. 4 is a schematic representation of one variation of the preferred device;

FIG. 5 is a schematic representation of a preferred vibratory actuator;

FIG. 6 is a schematic representation of one variation of the preferred device and the preferred vibratory actuator;

FIG. 7 is a schematic representation of a use scenario in accordance with the preferred device in the second configuration;

FIG. 8 is a schematic representation of one variation of the preferred device;

FIG. 9 is a schematic representation of a use scenario in accordance with the preferred device in the first configuration;

FIG. 10 is a schematic representation in accordance with one variation of a power module of the preferred device; and

FIGS. 11A and 11B are schematic representations in accordance with one variation of an interaction module of the preferred device.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The following description of the preferred embodiment of the invention is not intended to limit the invention to these

2

preferred embodiments, but rather to enable any person skilled in the art to make and use this invention.

1. Device for Sexual Stimulation

As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, a device 100 for sexual stimulation includes: an interaction module 110, a power module 120, and a control module 130. The interaction module 110 includes a housing 113, a female power port 114 supported by the housing 113, and a first vibratory actuator 111 and a second vibratory actuator 112 coupled to the female power port 114, isolated from the housing 113, and supported by the housing 113. The power module 120 includes a rechargeable battery 121 and a male power port 124 coupled to the battery 121. The male power port 124 is configurable between: a first configuration in which the male power port 124 transiently couples to a female charge port of an external power source to charge the battery 121 (shown in FIG. 9); and a second configuration in which the male power port 124 transiently retains the power module 120 against the interaction module 110 via the female power port 114 of the interaction module 110 and communicates power to the vibratory actuators 111, 112, via the female power port 114, to generate haptic vibratory stimulation. The control module 130 includes a plurality of input regions 131 and is configured to control vibratory magnitude settings and vibratory pattern settings of the vibratory actuators 111, 112 based upon inputs on the input regions 131.

In a variation of the device 100 for sexual stimulation, the interaction module 110 includes a housing 113 a female power port 114 supported by the housing 113, and a haptic stimulation unit coupled to the female power port 114 and configured to stimulate soft tissue of a user. In this variation, the male power port 124 is operable between: a first configuration in which the male power port 124 transiently couples to a female charge port of an external power source to charge the battery 121; and a second configuration in which the male power port 124 transiently retains the power module 120 against the interaction module 110 via the female power port 114 of the interaction module 110 and communicates power to the haptic stimulation unit, via the female power port 114, to stimulate the sex organ. Furthermore, the control module 130 includes a plurality of input regions and is configured to control stimulation settings of the haptic stimulation unit based upon inputs on the input regions 131. This variation of the device 100 therefore implements a haptic stimulation unit, which can include any one or more of a vibratory actuator, a heating element, a cooling element, a linear or non-linear actuator, or any other suitable stimulatory unit, element, or component.

The device 100 preferably functions as a sex toy and can be manipulated by a user to stimulate a sex organ of the user or a sex organ of a partner of the user. The device 100 may be used with the intent of initiating or aiding in orgasm. The device 100 includes an interaction module, configured to contact and stimulate a sex organ of a user, and a power module, configured to power the interaction module 110 and to be held by the user when engaging the interaction module 110 against or inside a sex organ, as shown in FIG. 7. When the interaction module 110 and the power module 120 are assembled in the second configuration, shown in FIG. 2, the interaction module 110 sources power from the power module 120 to generate a haptic stimulation suitable for sexual stimulation. The device 100 further enables the user to separate the power module 120 from the interaction module 110 such that visual or tactile exposure to the interaction module 110, such as by the user and other observers, can be substantially limited while the device 100 is not in use and while the battery 121 is recharged.

Generally, the power module **120** and the interaction module **110** are preferably separable such that the portion of the device **100** that contacts or is inserted into a sex organ (i.e. the interaction module **110**) can be set aside or stored while a discreet portion of the device **100** (i.e. the power module **120**) is recharged in plain view and through a common power source. For example, the male power port **124** of the power module **120** can plug into a Universal Serial Bus (USB) port on a computer (shown in FIG. 9), a standard wall outlet, or a coaxial charging jack to charge the battery **121** while the interaction module **110** is stored in a bedside table. Therefore, the particular configuration of the device **100** can minimize handling or visual exposure of the interaction module **110**, which can be substantially more personal and more conspicuous than the power module **120**, when the device **100** is not in use. This particular configuration can further permit the less conspicuous, more innocuous (e.g., less personal) power module to be charged without attracting scrutiny from observers.

The interaction module **110** of the device **100** includes a housing **113**, a female power port **114** supported by the housing **113**, and a first and a second vibratory actuator **111**, **112** coupled to the female power port **114**, isolated from the housing **113**, and supported by the housing **113**. The interaction module **110** is preferably configured to stimulate an external female sex organ, such as the clitoris, labia, vulva, perineum, anus, nipple, breast, or areola. The interaction module **110** can additionally or alternatively be configured to stimulate a male sex organ, such as the penis, scrotum, or anus. The interaction module **110** can additionally or alternatively function to stimulate an internal sex organ, such as the vagina, G-spot, prostate, rectum, or any other internal or external portion of the body of a female or male user. The interaction module **110** preferably generates vibratory stimulation through an electromechanical actuator, such as an electric motor coupled to a counterweight, a piezoelectric transducer coupled to a mass, a charged diaphragm coupled to a mass, or any other linear or rotary actuator manipulating an (eccentric) mass to generate a vibration. Furthermore, the counterweight or mass can include a bladder system with a hydraulic or pneumatic cavity configured to fill and drain to adjust the vibratory output or “feel” of the vibratory actuator.

However, as described in the variation of the device **100** above, the interaction module **110** can include any other element or component to stimulate a sex organ or soft tissue of the user in any other way. For example, the interaction module **110** can include a heating or cooling element to heat or cool a portion of the body of the user, a set of electrodes to output electrical shocks or pulses to a portion of the body of the user, lights or a display to output visual cues, or a smell module to provide olfactory sensations. The interaction module **110** can also haptically stimulate the user with non-vibratory mechanical motion, such as by bending, twisting, curling, flexing, elongating, or inflating. Alternatively and as shown in FIGS. **11A** and **11B**, the interaction module **110** can include a single vibratory actuator in. The interaction module **110** can therefore include any other suitable electrical, electromechanical, or electrochemical component and/or linkage to stimulate a sex organ or soft tissue of a user.

As shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, one example implementation of the device **100** includes a vibratory actuator **111** that is an electromechanical motor with an output shaft that supports a counterweight (i.e. eccentric mass). The motor is preferably a DC micromotor, though the motor can alternatively be a brushless motor, servomotor, stepper motor, or any other suitable type of motor of any other size. As shown in FIGS.

1 and **5**, the vibratory actuator **111** can further include an enclosure that shields the output shaft and counterweight when in motion. The motor is preferably substantially circular in cross-section, and the enclosure is preferably cylindrical with a shoulder proximal a closed end such that the motor can be slip-fit into the enclosure, output shaft first, with the shoulder retaining the face of the motor proximal the output. A plug **170** can then be pressed into the open end of the enclosure to capture the motor. As shown in FIGS. **1** and **5**, the assembly can further include an o-ring or other isolator between the plug **170** and the back face of the motor to absorb manufacturing tolerances of the assembly, such as length or diameter tolerances of the enclosure, the plug **170**, or the motor. As shown in FIG. **1**, motor leads **160** preferably pass through a bore in the plug **170**, and the plug **170** preferably further includes a first external circular groove adjacent a second external circular groove, the first and second grooves configured to capture a first isolator **140** and a second isolator **150**, respectively. The first isolator **140** preferably pivotably couples the motor to the housing **113**, and the second isolator **150** preferably contacts a surface of the housing **113** to define a soft pivot endstop. Generally, the first isolator **140** preferably substantially constrains the vibratory actuator in three degrees of translation and enables the vibratory actuator in at least two degrees of rotation up to the compressible endstop defined by the second isolator **150**. The first and second isolators **140**, **150** are preferably o-rings that engage the circular grooves in the plug **170**, wherein the second isolator **150** is of an outer diameter less than the outer diameter of the first isolator **140**, and wherein the second isolator **150** is of a cross-sectional area less than the cross-sectional area of the first isolator **140**. In this example implementation and as shown in FIG. **6**, the housing **113** preferably includes a receptacle (e.g., an internal bore with internal shoulder) that captures the plug **170** and isolators **140**, **150** and enables the vibratory actuator **111** to pivot about the first isolator **140**, wherein the second isolator **150** limits maximum off-axis deflection of the motor assembly (e.g., less than 10° off axis). This soft coupling between the housing **113** and the vibratory actuator **111** preferably isolates counterweight-induced vibrations from the housing **113**, which can limit vibrations communicated to the power module **120** via the housing **113**, the female power port **114**, and the male power port **124** when the device **100** is in use. Therefore, the soft coupling between the housing **113** and the vibratory actuator **111** can render the device **100** more comfortable for the user by reducing vibrations transmitted from the vibratory actuator **111** into a hand supporting the power module **120** while in use.

However, features or elements of the foregoing example implementation of the vibratory actuator **111** can be incorporated into any other one or more components. For example, the enclosure can incorporate the external circular grooves, thereby eliminating the need for the plug **170**. In another example, the enclosure can define internal circular grooves that capture internal isolators (e.g., o-rings), wherein the isolators both retain the motor within the enclosure and pivotably couple the enclosure to a protrusion extending from the housing **113**. In yet another example, the enclosure can encompass the counterweight and only a portion of the length of the motor, and the isolators can engage external circular grooves machined or formed into the motor casing. In other example implementations, the vibratory actuator **111** can couple to the housing **113** via a ball-in-socket joint, a single rubber sleeve or gasket arranged between the housing **113** and the enclosure, a flex-or fluid-coupling, a four-bar linkage in which the housing **113** and

enclosure each define a linkage, or any other suitable mechanical linkage or coupling that mechanically couples the motor and/or the enclosure to the housing 113 with adequate vibration isolation. Furthermore, the motor, counterweight, output shaft, enclosure, isolators, or housing receptacle or protrusion that engages the isolators can be of any other form, dimension, geometry, or arrangement.

Housing material selection can affect transmission of vibrations from the vibratory actuators 111, 112 directly into the body of the user and/or into the power module 120. Generally, the housing 113 is preferably a substantially rigid material, such as plastic or metal, to minimize low-frequency vibration transmission into the power module 120, and the housing 113 can be machined from billet, die cast, investment cast, stamped, etched, injection molded, stamped, formed, or manufactured according to any one or more techniques or methods. For example, the housing 113 can be diecast zinc, machined aluminum, injection molded high-density polyethylene (HDPE) or nylon, or stamped from stainless steel sheet. Alternatively, the housing 113 can be of a material that is substantially elastic or flexible, such as with a resonant frequency outside of an operating frequency range of the vibratory actuators 111, 112. For example, the housing 113 can be molded rubber. However, the housing 113 can be any other suitable material and can be manufactured via any other method or combination of methods.

The interaction module 110 preferably includes a pair of electromechanical vibratory actuators, each powered through a pair of leads electrically coupled to a printed circuit board (PCB) coupled to the female power port 114. The PCB can also support the female power port 114 against the housing 113. The female power port 114 is preferably a standard female USB socket including four pins. However, the female power port 114 can include a mini- or micro-USB port, a coaxial power jack, a Thunderbolt jack, an audio-type jack, Firewire, eSATA, HDMI, or any other suitable type or form of jack or digital port. In one variation of the device 100, the interaction module 110 includes a male or sexless jack or port rather than a female port, and the power module 120 includes a corresponding female or sexless jack or port. The PCB preferably defines an electrical interface between the female power port 114 and the vibratory actuator 111 leads, though the female power port 114 can directly or indirectly interface with the motor leads through any other component.

In one example implementation in which the female power port 114 is a female USB socket, the PCB includes traces that communicate independent power signals from the female power port 114 to the vibratory actuators 111, 112. In this example implementation, a dedicated ground pin of the female power port 114 is preferably connected to one lead from each of the vibratory actuators 111, 112. A first standard digital pin of the female power port 114 is connected to a second lead of one vibratory actuator, and a second standard digital pin of the female power port 114 is connected to another lead of the second vibratory actuator 112 such that independent power signals can be independently communicated through the female power port 114 and over a common ground loop to independently control the vibratory actuators 111, 112. However, one or more independent power signals can be communicated to the vibratory actuators 111, 112 via the female power port 114 and/or PCB to control the vibratory actuators 111, 112 in any other way.

In another example implementation in which the female power port 114 is a female USB socket, the PCB includes a driver 133 (e.g., a motor driver) for each vibratory actuator

111, 112, wherein each driver 133 receives an independent digital control signal via a digital pin of the female power port 114 and distributes a power signal, in accordance with the digital control signal, from a power pin of the female power port 114 to a corresponding vibratory actuator. (In this and other example implementations, the driver(s) 133 are preferably a portion of the control module 130.) In this example implementation, the USB port includes a first pin that is an analog power pin, a second pin that is a ground pin, a third pin that is a first digital pin, and a fourth pin that is a second digital pin, as shown in FIG. 10. In this configuration, the drivers 133 and vibratory actuators 111, 112 are preferably connected to the ground pin to define a common ground path, and the drivers 133 preferably siphon current from the power pin to enable driver operation. This configuration can reduce noise or inductive interference across analog and/or digital circuitry within the interaction module, 110, power module 120, and/or control module 130, thus enabling uninterrupted operation of a processor 132, controller, or memory arranged within any of the modules 110, 120, 130.

As shown in FIG. 4, the interaction module 110 preferably further includes a polymer sleeve that sheaths a portion of the housing 113 and the vibratory actuators 111, 112. The polymer sleeve 115 is preferably a silicone polymer that is molded around the housing 113 and the vibratory actuators 111, 112 (or haptic stimulation units) in situ to define a waterproof, dustproof, and hermetic sheath over the portion of the interaction module 110. Alternatively, the polymer sleeve 115 can be molded separately and subsequently stretched or installed over the housing 113 and vibratory actuators 111, 112 to define the waterproof, dustproof, and hermetic barrier around the interaction module 110. The polymer sleeve 115 preferably terminates proximal the female power port 114, and at least one of the interaction and power modules 110, 120 preferably includes a seal 180 proximal a respective power port such that the seal 180 and polymer sleeve can cooperate to define a complete waterproof, dustproof, and hermetic barrier around the interaction module 110 when the interaction and power modules are assembled. For example, the seal 180 can be an o-ring seal around the male power port 124, as shown in FIG. 2, wherein the seal 180 engages the female power port 114 to cooperate with the polymer sleeve 115 to define a barrier with an Ingress Protection Rating of 25 or higher. Alternatively, the interaction module 110 can include a metal parting band that supports the female power port 114 and engages a seal around the male power port to seal the device 100 in the second configuration, as shown in FIG. 1. The polymer sleeve 115 preferably also defines a substantially smooth surface that is food-safe, body-safe, hygienic, and cleanable with minimal internal or concave surfaces that can trap or hold dirt, bacteria, or fluid.

In one example implementation of the device 100 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the housing 113 supports the vibratory actuators 111, 112 with axes substantially parallel and offset when not in use. When in operation or held against a sex organ (as shown in FIG. 7), the vibratory actuators 111, 112 can deflect off axis, such as by pivoting about the housing-actuator junction by up to several degrees. In this example implementation, the polymer sleeve 115 preferably deflects with the vibratory actuators 111, 112 but does not substantially retard transmission of vibrations from the vibratory actuators 111, 112 into the body of the user. Furthermore, the vibratory actuators 111, 112 are preferably powered by independent power signals and can therefore generate vibrations independently. Each vibratory actuator is therefore

preferably mechanically decoupled from the other vibratory actuator via the isolators **140**, **150** to define a distinct vibration source, and the polymer sleeve **115** preferably sheaths but does not connect the free ends of the vibratory actuators **111**, **112**, as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**. This geometry can enable the device **100** to output distinct, tactilely-discernible vibration patterns from multiple haptic stimulation sources. In one example, the device **100** can repetitively pulse one vibratory actuator and then the other vibratory actuator. In another example, the device **100** can repetitively ramp the vibratory motors up and down and out of phase, such as 45°, 90°, or 180° out of phase. In yet another example, the device **100** can continuously drive one vibratory motor and pulse the other vibratory motor at pseudorandomly-selected times and power settings, such as every one to five seconds for between one half and two seconds between 50% and 100% power.

The polymer sleeve **115** can further define interaction surfaces proximal the vibratory actuators **111**, **112**. In one example implementation shown in FIG. **8**, the polymer sleeve **115** includes ripples, studs, cilia-like structures, or other tactilely-distinct features adjacent each vibratory actuator. These features can be patterned uniformly around each vibratory actuator or can be arranged on specific areas of the polymer sleeve **115**. For example, the polymer sleeve **115** can define ripples on one side of the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** and cilia-like structures on the opposite side of the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** such that the user can flip the device **100** for application of different sensory stimulation. In another example implementation shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, the polymer sleeve **115** defines a split loop over the housing **113** and vibratory actuators, wherein the polymer material extends from each vibratory actuator to the opposite vibrator actuator to define a pair of cusps. In this example implementation, the geometry of the polymer sleeve **115** is preferably configured to accommodate the clitoris of a female user, either within the split loop or between the cusps. In this variation and as shown in shown in FIGS. **3A**, **3B**, and **3C**, the polymer sleeve **115** can further include a chamfer of a first size on one side of the cusps and a surface of a different profile on the opposite side of the cusps such that a user can select a surface geometry that best accommodates the unique size, shape, or location of the user's clitoris. However, the polymer sleeve **115** can be of any other geometry, include any other stimulation feature, and define any other stimulation surface configured to accommodate or stimulate any other sex organ or portion of the body of the user.

The interaction module **110** preferably includes a pair of vibratory actuators **111**, **112**, though the interaction module **110** can include any other number of vibratory actuators or haptic stimulation units of any other type or form, supported by the housing **113** in any other way, and powered in any other way to output any other suitable haptic stimulation. In example implementations, the interaction module **110** can include: one vibratory actuator; three (or more) vibratory actuators controlled by a processor via a multiplexer or serial-in, parallel-out (SIPO) shift register electrically coupled to three (or more) motor drivers; a vibratory actuator and a heating element; or two vibratory actuators and an infrared emitter. However, the interaction module **110** can include any other suitable haptic stimulation unit, component, or element. Furthermore, the interaction module **110** can define a geometry or include a haptic stimulation unit suitable for stimulation of a particular sex organ. In example implementations shown in FIG. **8**, the interaction module **110** can include: a vibratory actuator adjacent a blunt (e.g.,

convex, narrowly protruding) surface suitable for clitoral stimulation (interaction module **110**); a vibratory actuator within an elongated (e.g., phallic) member suitable for inter-vaginal stimulation (interaction module **110b**); or a vibratory actuator within a deeply-ribbed elongated member suitable for inter-rectal stimulation (interaction module **110c**). In another implementation, the interaction module **110** and power module **120** can each define semicircular swept sections that assemble in the second configuration to define a ring, wherein the interaction module **110** includes a vibratory actuator such that the device **100** is suitable for penile stimulation. The interaction module **110** can further define a geometry suitable for stimulation of multiple sex organs simultaneously. For example and as shown in FIG. **8**, an interaction module **110d** can include a vibratory actuator within an elongated member suitable for inter-vaginal stimulation and a second vibratory actuator within a short curved member proximal one end of the elongated member and suitable for simultaneous clitoral stimulation. However, the interaction module **110** can include any other haptic stimulation unit in any other quantity or combination, and the interaction module **110** can be of any other form or geometry suitable for stimulation of any other one or more portions of the body of the user.

The power module **120** of the device **100** includes the rechargeable battery **121** and the male power port **124** coupled to the battery **121**, wherein the male power port **124** is configurable between the first configuration and the second configuration. As shown in FIGS. **2** and **9**, in the first configuration, the male power port **124** transiently couples to a female charge port of an external power source to charge the battery **121**. As shown in FIG. **1**, in the second configuration, the male power port **124** transiently retains the interaction module **110** via the female power port **114** and communicates power to the vibratory actuators **111**, **112**, via the female power port **114**, to generate haptic vibratory stimulation. As described above, the power module **120** is preferably separable from the interaction module **110** such that the device **100** can be recharged while the interaction module **110**, which can be substantially more personal and less discreet than the power module **120**, is set aside. The battery **121** can be any of a lithium-polymer, lithium-ion, lithium iron phosphate, nickel metal hydride, or any other suitable type of rechargeable electric battery. The battery **121** preferably does not require removal from the power module **120** to be recharged and is instead preferably recharged by plugging the power module **120** into an external electric power source, such as a computer (e.g., via a USB port, shown in FIG. **9**) or a wall outlet.

However, the battery **121** can store any other type of energy in any other form. For example, the battery **121** can store chemical energy in the form of hydrogen, wherein the male power port **124** sources hydrogen from an external source, the battery **121** stores the hydrogen, and an onboard generator or fuel cell converts the hydrogen into electrical energy to power the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation units. Alternatively, the battery **121** can store hydraulic pressure, wherein the male power port **124** communicates hydraulic pressure, via the female power port **114**, to the vibratory actuators to induce a vibration. The battery **121** (i.e. power storage module) can also store pneumatic pressure, vacuum, heat, steam, or any other electrical, chemical, or mechanical form of energy to subsequently power the interaction module **110**.

The power module **120** preferably further includes a charging circuit that controls current and/or voltage signals across the battery leads as the battery **121** is charged. In an

example implementation in which the battery **121** is a lithium-ion battery and the male power port **124** is configured to engage a USB port on a computer, the charging circuit can first deliver a near-constant amperage at increasing voltage to the battery **121** until a desired battery voltage is reached, followed by diminishing current at near-constant voltage until the battery **121** reaches full charge saturation. If the power module **120** remains connected to the computer or other power source, the charging circuit can further supply topping charge if the battery **121** discharges over time (e.g., due to leakage currents in integrated circuits within the device **100**). Furthermore, the charging circuit can communicate with a USB port on a computer, via data (i.e. digital) pins on the male power port **124**, to source additional current from the port. For example, without active communication between the charge circuitry and the computer USB port, the power module **120** may only source 150 mA from the computer USB port. However, by actively communicating with the computer USB port through the USB data pins, the charging circuit can request a 500 mA source current from the computer USB port, which can enable faster battery charging.

The power module **120** preferably further includes a power-conditioning circuit. The power-conditioning circuit can include a voltage regulator, a buck circuit, a boost circuit, or other suitable electric circuit that transforms the output of the battery **121** into signal of desired voltage or current. For example, the battery **121** can output a nominal 3.7V, and the power-conditioning circuit can boost the battery output voltage to 5.0V nominal to power a processor that controls the vibratory actuators **111**, **112**. Furthermore, the power-conditioning circuit can regulate the output of the battery **121** from 3.7V nominal to a maximum of 2.0V to prevent damage to a motor or other component within a vibratory actuator **111** or haptic stimulation unit. However, the power-conditioning circuit can function in any other way to condition signals from the battery **121** to power various components and systems within the device **100**. Furthermore, the power-conditioning circuit and/or the charging circuit can be arranged within the interaction module **110** rather than within the power module **120**.

As described above, the male power port **124** is configurable between a first configuration and a second configuration, wherein the male power port **124** communicates a power signal into the power module **120** (e.g., into the battery **121**) from an external source in the first configuration, and wherein the male power port **124** communicates a power signal from the battery **121** and into the interaction module **110** in the second configuration. The male power port **124** preferably includes a set of pins, tabs, conductive surfaces, etc. configured to engage a standard charging jack to charge the battery **121** in the first configuration. The male power port **124** is further configured to communicate power and/or control signals to the interaction module **110** over at least some of the same pins, tabs, surfaces, etc. to power and/or control the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation unit(s) in the second configuration. The male power port **124** is preferably a standard male USB plug, though the male power port **124** can be a mini- or micro-USB port, a coaxial power jack, a Thunderbolt jack, an audio-type jack, or any other suitable male or female plug, receptacle, or socket.

In the example implementation in which the male power port **124** is a male USB plug, the male power port **124** preferably transmits an analog current signal from a female USB socket of an external power source (e.g., a computer, a wall adapter) via a dedicated standard ground pin and a

dedicated standard power pin (e.g., VCC pin). As described above, the male power port **124** can further communicate with the external power source, via a digital send and digital receive pin (i.e. digital I/O pins), to source additional current from the external power source. In one example implementation described above in which one driver **133** per vibratory actuator is arranged within the power module **120**, the power module **120** (or control module **130**) preferably decouples digital circuitry from the digital I/O pins and instead couples the drivers **133** to the digital I/O pins. This configuration can enable communication of analog motor signals to the interaction module **110** to activate the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** via the female power port **114**, over a common ground loop including the dedicated ground pin. In this example implementation, digital I/O pins of the male power port **124** can therefore send and receive digital signals and transmit analog signals.

In another example implementation described above in which the drivers **133** are arranged within the interaction module **110**, the male power port **124** preferably couples power and ground terminals of the battery **121** or power-conditioning circuit to the interaction module **110** via the dedicated power and ground pins. The male power port **124** preferably further communicates digital motor control signals from the processor **132** to the drivers **133** via the digital I/O pins to activate the vibratory actuators **111**, **112**. In this example implementation the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** are preferably powered by the drivers **133** via a common power and ground loop. However, the male power port **124** can communicate digital and/or analog signals with the external power source and/or with the interaction module **110** in any other way.

As shown in FIG. 4, the power module **120** preferably further includes a second housing **125** that defines a waterproof, dustproof, and hermetic boundary around the battery **121** in the second configuration (i.e. when the interaction module **110** and power module are assembled). Generally, the second housing **125** preferably cooperates with the seal **180** and the polymer sleeve **115** to enclose and seal the power ports **114**, **124**, the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation units, the battery **121**, and the control module **130** against fluid, dust, or other ingress in the second configuration. The second housing **125** and the polymer sleeve **115** can further enclose and seal a charge circuit, a power-conditioning circuit, a processor **132**, a driver **133**, a memory module, and/or any component within the device **100**. The second housing **125** is preferably a substantially rigid material, such as a metal or rigid plastic, though the housing **113** can alternatively include a rigid substrate with a soft sheath or coating, such as a polymer sleeve similar to the polymer sleeve **115** of the interaction device. However, the exterior surface of the second housing **125** is preferably food-safe, body-safe, hygienic, and cleanable with minimal internal or concave surfaces that can trap or hold dirt, bacteria, or fluid. Furthermore, the outer cross-section of the second housing **125** proximal the male power port **124** is preferably substantially similar to the outer cross-section of the interaction module **110** proximal the female power port **114** such that the device **100** appears substantially continuous across the power and interaction modules in the second configuration (i.e. when assembled), as shown in FIG. 1.

In a variation of the second configuration, the interaction and power modules **110**, **120** are separated by an extension cable coupled at a first end to the female power port **114** and on a second opposite end to the male power port **124**. In this variation of the second configuration, the power module **120** can power and/or control the interaction module **110** sub-

11

stantially remotely via the extension cable, which can enable the use to stimulate a different sex organ, stimulate a sex organ in a different way, and/or stimulate a sex organ more comfortable. The extension cable preferably includes a seal at both the first end and the second end, wherein the seals cooperate with the interaction module **110** and the power module **120** to define waterproof, dustproof, and hermetic barriers around the modules **110**, **120** in this variation of the second configuration.

The control module **130** includes a plurality of input regions and is configured to control vibratory magnitude settings and vibratory pattern settings of the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** based upon inputs on the input regions **131**. The control module **130** therefore preferably includes a button or other type of input region **131** configured to receive an input from a user, the processor **132**, and the driver(s) **133** (e.g., a motor driver, as described above).

The processor **132** is preferably a microprocessor, such as the ATmega328 microcontroller by Atmel Corporation, configured to read analog pins or digital bits set by the input regions **131** and further configured to set digital output pins to control the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation unit(s). The processor **132** preferably controls operation of each vibratory actuator **111**, **112** or a haptic stimulation unit by modulating the state of a digital output pin connected to a motor driver **133** (e.g., a MOSFET, an H-bridge), wherein the driver **133** changes state according to the digital output pin to open and close a high-current path to the battery **121** (or power-conditioning circuit) to disable and enable the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** (or haptic stimulation unit), respectively. The driver **133** therefore can function to isolate the processor **132** from high-current signals. The processor **132** preferably controls an output pin connected to the driver **133** via pulse-width modulation at a frequency less than a maximum switching frequency of the driver **133**, thus enabling the processor **132** to pulse the output pin at a duty cycle between 0% and 100% to vary the magnitude of vibrations output by the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** between full stop and full speed. The processor **132** preferably sets the state of each digital output pin, connected to a vibratory actuator or haptic stimulation unit via a driver, independently such that the vibratory actuators or haptic stimulation units can be independently controlled. However, the processor **132** can set the state of one digital output pin connected to one driver electrically coupled to two or more vibratory actuators or haptic stimulation units. Alternatively, the processor **132** can set the state of one digital output pin connected to two drivers, each electrically coupled to one or more vibratory actuators or haptic stimulation units. Yet alternatively, the processor **132** can communicate with a multiplexer via two or more digital output pins (e.g., one input pin and one output pin) to control three or more vibratory actuators or haptic stimulation units, via drivers, with a minimum of digital output pins. However, the processor **132** can function in any other way to control the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation unit(s).

The processor **132** preferably stores vibratory patterns or other haptic stimulation patterns such that the user can cycle through the vibratory patterns to access different sensory stimulations. For example, the processor **132** can store a steady vibration pattern, ramp patterns, pulsation patterns, pseudo-random pulsation or ramp patterns, or any combinations thereof. The processor preferably stores the stimulation patterns in the ROM and then transfers the patterns internally and on the fly to the processor's RAM. The processor **132** can store the patterns in compressed format then decompress the patterns, which can enable the proces-

12

sor **132** to phase shift, time stretch, time shrink, or modify the amplitude of the patterns.

The processor **132** preferably accesses a pre-loaded set of vibratory patterns or other haptic stimulation patterns. However, the control module **130** can download additional stimulation patterns, such as through a computer when the male power port **124** is connected thereto. In one example, the user can download stimulation patterns through a website or native application hosted by a vibrator or sex toy manufacture, hosted on a forum including users of similar devices, or sent to the user by a friend, partner, or sex toy-related entity. Such predefined stimulation patterns can be recommended to the user by others with similar devices, such as through a social network, a blog, a forum, or a website hosted by a sex toy-related entity. In another example, the user can create a custom stimulation pattern through a website or native application executing on a computer or mobile device, and the user can then transfer the custom pattern to the device **100** for subsequent use.

In one variation, the device **100** is configured to operate in a charging mode in the first variation, a stimulation mode in the second configuration, and a secondary function mode in either of the first and second configurations. Generally, the processor **132** preferably identifies the current configuration of the device **100** and (seamlessly) adjusts operation or current function accordingly. For example, in the secondary function mode, the device **100** can function as a wired or wireless mass storage device (MSD) or a human interface device (HID) in which battery status or diagnostic information can be communicated to the user. Furthermore, the user can access the secondary function mode to lock, password protect, change the order of patterns, or create presets on the device **100**, such as from an external USB host device executing supplied software.

The input regions **131** preferably include a set of buttons that communicate with the processor **132** to set or modify operation of the device **100**. Each button is preferably a mechanical momentary pushbutton coupled to a pull-down resistor and to a digital input pin of the processor **132**. However, the input regions **131** can include a Hall effect switch, an optical switch, a capacitive touch sensor, a resistive touch sensor, an acoustic touch sensor, or any other suitable type of tactile switch or button. Furthermore, each input region **131** preferably provides tactile feedback to the user, such as in the form of a click, when the input region **131** is depressed or contacted by the user.

In one example implementation, the input regions **131** include a [POWER/MODE] button, a [DECREASE INTENSITY] button, and an [INCREASE INTENSITY] button. In this example implementation, the user can power the device **100** ON by depressing the [POWER/MODE] button, change a vibratory pattern setting by depressing the [POWER/MODE] button, increase the intensity of vibration (or speed of a vibratory pattern) by depressing the [INCREASE INTENSITY] button, decrease the intensity of vibration (or speed of a vibratory pattern) by depressing the [DECREASE INTENSITY] button, and power the device **100** OFF by depressing and holding the [POWER/MODE] button.

In a similar example implementation, the input regions **131** can include a [POWER/MODE] button and an [INTENSITY] button, wherein the user can power the device **100** ON by depressing the [POWER/MODE] button, cycle through vibratory pattern settings by depressing the [POWER/MODE], cycle through vibration intensity levels by depressing the [INTENSITY] button, and power the device **100** OFF by depressing both buttons simultaneously.

13

However, the processor **132** can modify operation of the device **100** according to any other single or combination of inputs at the input regions **131**.

Alternatively, the input region can include a dial, a slide, a series of toggle switches, or other type of input region, button, or control. For example, the input regions **131** can include a dial, through which the user can adjust the stimulation intensity, and a momentary mechanical pushbutton, through which the user can power the device **100** ON and OFF and cycle through available modes (e.g., vibratory pattern settings). However, the input regions **131** of the control module **130** can be of any other type, capture any other user input, and modify operation of the device **100** in any other way. Furthermore, the input regions **131** are preferably backlit, such as with an LED arranged behind a translucent button. In this implementation, the backlights preferably depict the level of charge of the battery **121** when charging in the first configuration. For example in the first configuration, the backlights can blink slowly when the battery **121** has minimal charge and blink faster as the energy content of the battery **121** increases, wherein the backlights show solid with the battery **121** is fully charged. This functionality is preferably controlled by the processor **132**, and the backlights can be any other suitable light-output device or lamp arranged in any other way on the device **100**.

The processor **132** is preferably further configured to enter a sleep state, such as after a threshold period of time without use and/or given a user input to turn the device **100** OFF, in order to minimize current drain from the battery **121**. In this implementation, a user input at an input region **131** preferably trips an interrupt of the processor **132**, which triggers the processor **132** to exit the sleep or OFF state. When powering ON, the processor **132** can pulse a vibratory actuator or haptic stimulation unit in a pattern indicative of the charge on the battery **121**. For example, the processor **132** can pulse a vibratory actuator five times when the battery **121** that has between 80 and 100% charge, four times when the battery **121** that has 60 to 80% charge, three time when the battery **121** that has 40 to 60% charge, etc. Alternatively, when ON, the processor **132** can adjust the intensity of a backlight behind an input region or the intensity level of any other lamp, LED, or output mechanism on or in the device **100** to indicate battery level.

In one example implementation, the input regions **131** of the control module **130** are arranged on or in the power module **120**, as shown in FIG. 1. In this implementation, the processor **132** and the drivers **133** are also arranged within the power module **120** such that the processor **132** can substantially directly access input region outputs and substantially directly communicate with the drivers **133** (e.g., not through the power ports). In this variation, high-current drive signals for the vibratory actuators **111**, **112** or haptic stimulation unit are preferably communicated to the interaction module **110** through the power ports. Furthermore, in this example implementation, the input regions **131** are preferably arranged on the power module **120** opposite the male power port **124** (and opposite the interaction module **110**) such that the input regions **131** are substantially accessible to the user while holding the power module **120**, which preferably transmits less vibration or other haptic stimulation into a hand of the user.

In another example implementation, the input regions **131** of the control module **130** and the processor **132** are also arranged on or in the power module **120**, and the drivers **133** are arranged within the interaction module **110**. In this example implementation, the processor **132** preferably communicates with the drivers **133** over the power ports, as

14

described above. Furthermore, in this example implementation, the input regions **131** are preferably arranged on the power module **120** opposite the male power port **124** (and opposite the interaction module **110**) such that the input regions **131** are substantially accessible to the user while holding the power module **120**, as described above.

In yet another example implementation, the input regions **131** are arranged on or in the interaction module **110**. In this example implementation, the processor **132** is also preferably arranged within the interaction module **110** and is powered by the battery **121** through the power ports. The processor **132** can therefore also communicate substantially directly with the drivers **133** to control the vibration actuators **111**, **112** or the haptic stimulation unit(s). Alternatively, the processor **132** can be arranged within the power module **120** and access input region states through the power module **120**, such as by communicating, via one-wire or I2C communication protocol, with a parallel-in, serial-out (PISO) shift register electrically coupled to the input regions **131**. However, the input regions **131**, processor **132**, and drivers **133** can be arranged in any other way within the device **100** and communicate with one another over any other suitable connection or protocol.

One variation of the device **100** further includes a memory module. The memory module is preferably a solid state read/write hard drive or flash memory configured to store digital data for future access and/or erasure. The memory module is preferably arranged within the power module **120** such that the male power port **124** can communicate data digitally between the memory module and a connected external electronic device in the first configuration. In the implementation described above in which the male power port **124** is a male USB plug including a ground pin, a power pin, and two digital output pins, the memory module preferably downloads data via the ground pin and a digital input pin and preferably uploads data via the ground pin and a digital output pin. Therefore, in the first configuration, the power module **120** can additionally function as a flash drive or memory stick. Furthermore, the processor **132** can access data stored on the memory module, such as vibratory patterns or user vibratory preferences, to control device settings when in use (i.e. in the second configuration). However, the memory module can be arranged in any other way within the device **100** and can communicate with any other component internal or external the device **100**.

The memory module is preferably configured to store personal content of the user. Data stored on the memory module is preferably selected by the user and pushed to the device **100** in the first configuration. Additionally or alternatively, the memory module can receive data or personal content wirelessly, such as from a smartphone or tablet via a wireless communication module incorporated into the device **100**. For example, the wireless communication module can access a smartphone, via a Wi-Fi connection, to download personal video and images of the user engaging in sexual intercourse and other sexual acts, wherein the video and images are stored on the memory module. The wireless communication and memory modules can access and store such data in real time (i.e. while personal content is generated) and/or after the fact, such as when the user subsequently couples the device **100**, either wireless or physically, to an external electronic device. Similarly, the memory module can wirelessly broadcast personal content to an external electronic device. For example, the user can manipulate one or more input regions **131** to broadcast a video or image from the memory module to an external electronic device (e.g., a television, gaming console or

15

receiver coupled to a television, a smartphone, a tablet), and the user can further manipulate one or more input regions **131** to play, pause, fast forward, rewind, and/or thumb through the video or image. Furthermore, the memory module can be locked or password protected to secure stored data from unwanted or unwarranted access. Therefore, in this variation, the device **100** can function not only as a sex toy by also as a repository for personal and/or sex-related content such that physical and digital sexual paraphernalia can be embodied (e.g., accessed) in a single device.

In a similar variation, the device **100** can further include an auditory element that outputs an audio signal. The auditory element is preferably a speaker arranged within the power module **120**, and the auditory element preferably plays music, male or female sex noises, or other sounds to augment the user's sexual experience. Auditory or sound data is preferably stored on the memory module and access by the processor **132**, which controls the auditory element through a speaker driver. However, the auditory element can be arranged in any other way within the device **100**, can be controlled in any other way, and can output any other auditory signal.

In one variation of the device **100**, the power module **120** further includes a secondary vibratory actuator or haptic stimulation unit. The secondary vibratory actuator or haptic stimulation unit is also preferably powered by the battery **121**, through a driver, and is also preferably controlled by the processor **132**. In one example implementation, the interaction module **110** includes a vibratory actuator **111** within an elongated member suitable for inter-vaginal stimulation, and the power module **120** includes a secondary vibratory actuator within a short curved member suitable for clitoral stimulation, wherein the power and interaction modules **110**, **120** assemble in the second configuration to simultaneously stimulate both the G-spot and the clitoris of a female user. Alternatively, the power module **120** can include a heating element and can mechanically couple to the interaction module **110** that includes a vibratory actuator. However, the power module **120** can include any other suitable secondary vibratory actuator or haptic stimulation unit in any other quantity to cooperate with the interaction module **110** to sexually stimulate the user.

As shown in FIG. 8, the power module **120** can be further configured to mechanically couple to interaction modules of various shapes, geometries, and configurations. The power module **120** can therefore separately power (and control) multiple interaction modules such that the user can customize the device **100** for a particular sexual experience or for a particular sexual stimulation, use, or need. In an example implementation, the device **100** can define a sexual stimulation kit with interchangeable interaction modules, including a clitoral stimulation module **110a**, an inter-vaginal stimulation module **110b**, a rectal-stimulation module **110c**, and a combination vaginal- and clitoral-stimulation module **110d**, such that the user can assemble the power module **120** with different interaction modules suitable for stimulation of different sex organs. In this variation, the processor **132** and drivers **133** are preferably arranged within the power module **120** to reduce part count across the sexual stimulation kit. Each interaction module can be associated with different stimulation patterns, settings, or user preferences, and the processor **132** in the power module **120** therefore preferably identifies each unique type of interaction module such that each interaction module can be properly controlled. In one example implementation, the processor **132** reads a resistor value coupled to a pin of the female power port of an interaction module when the power and interaction modules

16

are assembled, wherein each type of interaction module includes a resistor of a value unique amongst the set (or kit) of interaction modules. In this example implementation, the resistor can be a component in a voltage divider defined in part by the interaction module **110** and/or the power module **120**, wherein an analog input pin of the processor **132** is coupled to an output of the voltage divider, and wherein the processor **132** implements an analog-to-digital converter to read the output of the voltage divider and identify the type of connected interaction module **110**. In another example implementation, the processor **132** in the power module **120** receives, via the power ports, a serial code from a secondary processor, timer, or other circuit within each interaction module when connected thereto, wherein the serial code is unique to each type of interaction module. However, the processor **132** in the power module **120** can identify the type of a connected interaction module in any other way or through any other hardware or software component. Furthermore and as described above, the processor **132** can substantially seamlessly modify operation or current function of the device **100** according to a current configuration, attachment, mode, input, etc.

2. Vibratory Actuator

As shown in FIG. 5, the vibratory actuator **200** for a sexual stimulation device includes: a motor including an output shaft **215**; a counterweight **220** coupled to the output shaft **215**; a enclosure **230** enclosing the counterweight **220** and the output shaft **215**; a first isolator **240** coupled to the motor **210** opposite the output shaft **215** and configured to pivotably couple the motor **210** to a motor support structure **213**; and a second isolator **250** coupled to the motor **210** adjacent the first isolator **240** and configured to contact a surface of the motor support structure **213** to define a pivot endstop.

The vibratory actuator **200** preferably outputs vibrations proximal a free end but limits transmission of vibrations into the support structure **213** (e.g., the housing **113** of the interaction module **110** described above) that captures an opposite end of the vibratory actuator **200** via the isolators **240**, **250**. The vibratory actuator **200** is preferably suitable as a haptic stimulation unit within a sexual stimulation device, such as the device **100** disclosed above. Because the vibratory actuator **200** substantially minimizes vibratory transmission into the support structure **213**, in comparison with a device with a substantially rigid motor mount, a device incorporating the vibratory actuator **200** can be more comfortable for a user holding the device, can be substantially quieter without sacrificing vibratory output or magnitude, and can be substantially more efficient by focusing vibration to a particular region of the device configured to stimulate a sex organ.

As shown in FIG. 5, the motor **210** includes an output shaft **215**, and the output shaft **215** preferably extends from a single face of the motor **210**. As described above, the motor **210** is preferably a DC micromotor, though the motor **210** can alternatively be a stepper motor, a servomotor, or a brushless motor of any other suitable size. The motor **210** preferably includes a motor casing **217** that is circular in cross-section, though the motor **210** or motor casing **217** can be of any other suitable geometry.

The counterweight **220** is coupled to the output shaft **215** and preferably induces a vibration when rotated by the motor **210**. The counterweight **220** is preferably pressed onto an end of the output shaft **215**, but can alternatively be bonded, fastened, pinched, brazed, or otherwise mechanically coupled to the output shaft **215**. The counterweight **220** is preferably sized for the motor size, motor speed, and

17

desired vibration frequency and/or magnitude. The counterweight **220** is preferably a substantially dense material, such as iron or brass, though the counterweight **220** can be any other suitable material.

As described above, the enclosure **230** encloses the counterweight **220** and the output shaft **215**. The enclosure **230** is preferably a spun, drawn, stamped, or machined metal enclosure **230** that slides over the output-side of the motor **210** to shield the output shaft **215** and the counterweight **220**. For example, the enclosure **230** can be stainless steel, cold-rolled steel with a zinc plating, aluminum, or brass. However, the enclosure **230** can be any other suitable material, such as plastic (e.g., HDPE, nylon), and can be manufactured via any other suitable technique, such as injection molding. As shown in FIG. 6 and described above, the enclosure **230** preferably includes an internal shoulder that engages the face of the motor **210** at the output side to locate the motor **210** longitudinally within the enclosure **230**. The internal profile of the enclosure **230** preferably accommodates the motor **210** via a slip fit with minimal spacing (e.g., <0.001" or 0.025 mm) between the internal wall of the enclosure **230** and the exterior surface of the motor casing **217**, though the motor **210** can be installed in the enclosure **230** with any other suitable fit.

The first isolator **240** is coupled to the motor **210** opposite the output shaft **215** and is configured to pivotably couple the motor **210** to the motor support structure **213**. The second isolator **250** is coupled to the motor **210** adjacent the first isolator **240** and is configured to contact a surface of the motor support structure **213** to define the pivot endstop. As described above and shown in FIG. 6, the first and second isolators preferably cooperate to pivotably couple the motor **210** to the motor support structure **213**, to isolate the support structure **213** from vibrations induced by the vibratory actuator **200**, and to limit maximum off-axis deflection of the vibratory actuator **200** relative to the support structure **213**. However, the isolators can alternatively constrain the vibratory actuator **200** in any other way, such as by limiting off-axis deflection of the vibratory actuator **200** within a single plane or by permitting the vibratory actuator **200** to translate axially or cross-axially proximal the first or second isolators and relative to the support structure **213**.

The first isolator **240** is preferably an o-ring of a first outer diameter and a first cross-sectional area, and the second isolator **250** is preferably an o-ring of a second outer diameter less than the first outer diameter and a second cross-sectional area less than the first cross-sectional area. As described above, the first and second isolators are preferably silicone o-rings of circular cross-section, such as Viton or buna o-rings. However, the isolators **240**, **250** can be of any other material, form, or geometry.

As shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the vibratory actuator **200** preferably further includes a plug **270** pressed into the open end of the enclosure **230** to constrain the motor **210**. The plug **270** preferably includes a first circular recess or groove configured to receive the first isolator **240**, wherein the first isolator **240** can further engage a recess or groove in the support structure **213** to couple the vibratory actuator **200** to the support structure **213**. The plug **270** preferably also includes a second circular recess proximal the first circular recess and configured to receive the second isolator **250** such that the second isolator **250** can define a compressible (or 'soft') endstop against a surface of the support structure **213** as the vibratory actuator **200** pivots about the first isolator **240**, as shown in FIG. 6. The plug **270** preferably further includes a through bore such that motor leads **260** can pass through the bore and electrically couple to a PCB, motor

18

driver, or other suitable electrical component, as described above. The plug **270** is preferably a machined aluminum plug **270** but can be any other suitable material and manufactured in any other way. Furthermore, features of the plug **270**, such as the circular recesses or grooves, can be incorporated into the motor casing **217** and/or into the enclosure **230** to enable similar functionality in variations of the vibratory actuator **200** that exclude the plug **270**. However, the vibratory actuator **200** can include any other component that functions in any other way or cooperates with any other component of the vibratory actuator **200** to output vibrations suitable to for a sexual stimulation device, such as the device **100** described above.

As a person skilled in the art will recognize from the previous detailed description and from the figures and claims, modifications and changes can be made to the preferred embodiments of the invention without departing from the scope of this invention as defined in the following claims.

We claim:

1. A device for sexual stimulation, comprising:

an interaction module comprising:

a first unitary housing comprising a first electrical port; and

a haptic stimulation unit enclosed by the first unitary housing, the haptic stimulation unit electrically coupled to the first electrical port;

a power module comprising:

a second unitary housing comprising a second electrical port, the second unitary housing removably mechanically coupled to the first unitary housing by the first and second electrical ports, the second electrical port removably electrically coupled to the first electrical port;

a rechargeable battery enclosed by the second unitary housing, the rechargeable battery electrically coupled to the second electrical port; and

an input mechanism; and

a stimulation unit driver electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery, the haptic stimulation unit, and the input mechanism, wherein the stimulation unit driver is enclosed by the second unitary housing.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the haptic stimulation unit comprises a vibratory actuator.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein the stimulation unit driver comprises a power transistor electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery and to the haptic stimulation unit.

4. The device of claim 1, further comprising a second haptic stimulation unit enclosed by the first unitary housing, wherein:

the first electrical port comprises:

a first electrical power contact electrically coupled to the haptic stimulation unit;

a second electrical power contact electrically coupled to the second haptic stimulation unit; and

a first electrical ground contact electrically coupled to the haptic stimulation unit and to the second haptic stimulation unit; and

the second electrical port comprises:

a third electrical power contact electrically coupled to the first electrical power contact and to the stimulation unit driver;

a fourth electrical power contact electrically coupled to the second electrical power contact and to the stimulation unit driver; and

19

a second electrical ground contact electrically coupled to the first electrical ground contact and to the stimulation unit driver.

5. The device of claim 4, wherein the stimulation unit driver comprises:

- a first power transistor electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery and to the third electrical power contact; and
- a second power transistor electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery and to the fourth electrical power contact.

6. The device of claim 4, wherein the first unitary housing further comprises:

- a support structure comprising the first electrical port;
- a first cantilever flexibly coupling the haptic stimulation unit to the support structure; and
- a second cantilever flexibly coupling the second haptic stimulation unit to the support structure.

7. The device of claim 1, wherein:

- the first unitary housing defines a first enclosure fluidly isolating the haptic stimulation unit from an ambient environment; and
- the second unitary housing defines a second enclosure fluidly isolating the rechargeable battery from the first enclosure and from the ambient environment.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein the first and second unitary housings cooperatively define an enclosure fluidly isolating the first and second electrical ports from an ambient environment.

9. The device of claim 1, wherein the first electrical port comprises a first standardized data connector and the second electrical port comprises a second standardized data connector.

10. The device of claim 1, wherein the rechargeable battery comprises a charging controller.

11. The device of claim 3, wherein the first and second unitary housings cooperatively define an enclosure fluidly isolating the first and second electrical ports from an ambient environment.

12. The device of claim 8, further comprising a gasket, wherein the enclosure is further cooperatively defined by the gasket.

13. A device for sexual stimulation, comprising:

- an interaction module comprising:
 - a first unitary housing comprising a first electrical port; and
 - a haptic stimulation unit enclosed by the first unitary housing, the haptic stimulation unit electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
- a power module comprising:
 - a second unitary housing comprising a second electrical port, the second unitary housing removably mechanically coupled to the first unitary housing by the first and second electrical ports, the second electrical port removably electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
 - a rechargeable battery enclosed by the second unitary housing, the rechargeable battery electrically coupled to the second electrical port; and
 - an input mechanism; and
- a stimulation unit driver electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery, the haptic stimulation unit, and the input mechanism;

wherein:

- the first electrical port comprises a first electrical contact electrically coupled to the haptic stimulation unit;

20

the second electrical port comprises a second electrical contact electrically coupled to the haptic stimulation unit and to the first electrical contact; and

the first and second unitary housings cooperatively define an enclosure fluidly isolating the first and second electrical contacts from an ambient environment.

14. The device of claim 13, wherein the stimulation unit driver is enclosed by the second unitary housing.

15. The device of claim 13, further comprising a gasket, wherein the enclosure is further cooperatively defined by the gasket.

16. The device of claim 13, wherein the first electrical port is retained against the second electrical port by a friction force.

17. The device of claim 13, wherein the enclosure fluidly isolates the first and second electrical ports from the ambient environment.

18. The device of claim 13, wherein:

- the first unitary housing defines a first enclosure fluidly isolating the haptic stimulation unit from the ambient environment; and
- the second unitary housing defines a second enclosure fluidly isolating the rechargeable battery from the first enclosure and from the ambient environment.

19. A device for sexual stimulation, comprising:

- an interaction module comprising:
 - a first unitary housing comprising a first electrical port; and
 - a haptic stimulation unit enclosed by the first unitary housing, the haptic stimulation unit electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
- a power module comprising:
 - a second unitary housing comprising a second electrical port, the second unitary housing removably mechanically coupled to the first unitary housing by the first and second electrical ports, the second electrical port removably electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
 - a rechargeable battery enclosed by the second unitary housing, the rechargeable battery electrically coupled to the second electrical port; and
 - an input mechanism; and
- a stimulation unit driver electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery, the haptic stimulation unit, and the input mechanism;

wherein the input mechanism comprises:

- a flexible polymer membrane; and
- a button cooperatively enclosed by the flexible polymer membrane and the second unitary housing.

20. A device for sexual stimulation, comprising:

- an interaction module comprising:
 - a first unitary housing comprising a first electrical port; and
 - a haptic stimulation unit enclosed by the first unitary housing, the haptic stimulation unit electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
- a power module comprising:
 - a second unitary housing comprising a second electrical port, the second unitary housing removably mechanically coupled to the first unitary housing by the first and second electrical ports, the second electrical port removably electrically coupled to the first electrical port;
 - a rechargeable battery enclosed by the second unitary housing, the rechargeable battery electrically coupled to the second electrical port; and
 - an input mechanism; and

21

a stimulation unit driver electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery, the haptic stimulation unit, and the input mechanism, wherein the stimulation unit driver comprises a power transistor electrically coupled to the rechargeable battery and to the haptic stimulation unit.

* * * * *

22